



Boston
Center of Excellence
Director: Martin P. Charns, DBA
Executive Summary for Fiscal Year 2008

The Center for Organization, Leadership and Management Research (COLMR), has continued its growth and increased its productivity and impacts through its fourth full year of operations. COLMR's unique research focus is to investigate and apply knowledge of innovative organization and management practices to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of health care services for our nation's veterans and the larger health care community. COLMR actively supports other HSR&D activities and investigators at VA Boston, has collaborative projects with several other HSR&D centers, and has close working relationships with several VISNs and VA Central Office groups.

COLMR has three research foci:

- 1) organization and management practices that result in higher quality of care,
- 2) organization and management practices that promote successful organizational change, especially change to implement evidence-based clinical practices, and
- 3) leadership and workforce development in health care organizations.

COLMR is a unique partnership of the VA Boston Healthcare System, the VHA Workforce Management and Consulting Office, the National Center for Organization Development (NCOD), Boston University, and four Veterans Integrated Service Networks:

- VA New England Healthcare System (VISN 1),
- VA Healthcare System of Ohio (VISN 10),
- Desert Pacific Healthcare Network (VISN 22),
- VA Midwest Healthcare Network (VISN 23).

The partners collaborate with COLMR investigators in conducting research to pursue COLMR's goals and have significant, positive impact on the VA health care system. The work of the partners in planning and implementing research projects is coordinated through COLMR's Collaborating Partners Council (CPC).

COLMR investigators continue to have significant local and national roles in VA through which they can influence policy and practice. These include Dr. Charns' role as co-chair of the Organizational Assessment Subcommittee of the VHA Human Resource Committee, and his, Dr. Meterko's, Mohr's and Ms. Nealon Seibert's roles in design, administration and analysis of the annual VA all-employee survey, and Dr. Meterko's role in the VA Nursing Outcomes Database (VANOD) annual, national survey of all RNs in VA. These surveys are both part of the regular practice in VHA, their results have been used to address performance areas in many medical centers, and the databases have been used in several research projects.

Key accomplishments this year include commencement of two newly-funded IIRs: IIR 05-221 "Team Process and Performance in Primary Care," David Mohr, PI and IIR 06-260, "Identifying and Characterizing High Performing VHA Nursing Homes," Michael Shwartz, PI. We have also received notice of contingent funding for two additional projects: IIR 07-244-3, "Evidence Based Medicine and Patient Centered Care: Coexistence or Conflict," Mark Meterko, PI and IIR 08-067-2, "Organizational Factors and Inpatient Medical Care Quality and Efficiency," Peter Kaboli (Iowa) and Joseph Restuccia, co-PIs submitted under the new

model for unique complementary contributions from two centers. Henry Lew, MD, an outstanding physician investigator has been recruited to VA Boston as chief of Rehabilitation Medicine. He and other COLMR investigators have submitted and received an affirmative response to a concept paper in response to the HSR&D solicitation on TBI.

The number COLMR publications and presentations have reached a high for the center, with 40 publications in peer-reviewed journals, two book chapters, and 38 conference presentations. Dr. VanDeusen Lukas' (co-authors Meterko, Mohr, Nealon Seibert from COLMR and Petzel, Director VISN 23 and Levesque, from the Chief Network Office) article on implementation of Advanced Clinic Access is VA, published as the lead article in the Journal of Ambulatory Care Management was accompanied by a commentary that noted its outstanding contribution to the field.